

REMARKS / ARGUMENTS

In complete response to the outstanding Official Action of October 6, 2004, on the above-identified application, reconsideration is respectfully requested. Claims 1-9, 23, 24, 28 and 29 remain in this application. Claims 1, 6, 23, 24, 28, and 29 are currently amended. Claims 2, 4, 5, and 7-9 remain as originally filed. Claim 3 is cancelled. And Claims 10-22, 25-27, and 30-32 have been withdrawn.

Claims 1, 6, 23, 24, 28, and 29 have been amended to better define the invention.

These claims have been amended to include the limitation that the liquid sample is selected from the group consisting of strong acids and salts of strong acids. These elements were previously found in now cancelled claim 3.

These claims have also been amended to include the limitation that the means not include ion exclusion. Support for this may be found at page 14, lines 6 through 8, wherein it is stated that :

"In strong acids, the predominant anion cannot be eliminated by ion exclusion, since that technique is suitable only for acids that are considered "weak" (i.e. only partially dissociated in water) acids."

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-9, 23-24, 28 and 29 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over DIONEX Technical Note 45, in view of Szecsody '527. Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-9, 23-24, 28 and 29 are not unpatentable over DIONEX Technical Note 45, in view of Szecsody '527.


Applicant has amended claims 1, 6, 23, 24, 28 and 29 to introduce the limitations that the liquid sample be selected from the group consisting of strong acids or salts of strong acids. An additional limitation that the claimed apparatus or process not include ion exclusion. As Applicant has argued in her reply filed on July 13, 2004, DIONIX Technical Note 45 teaches a process for determining trace ions in a weak-acid solution. The method disclosed in DIONIX Technical Note 45 requires such an ion exclusion preseperator (ICE). One of ordinary skill in the art would find that neither DIONIX Technical Note 45 nor SZECSODY '527, either alone or in combination, fails to teach or suggest the present invention.

CONCLUSION

In view of the current amendments, the present application now stands in condition for allowance. Early notice to this effect is earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that a telephone call would expedite prosecution of the application, he is invited to call the undersigned attorney at the number listed below.

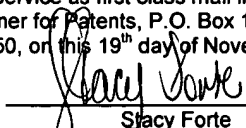
Respectfully submitted,


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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING UNDER 37 CFR 1.8(a)

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on this 19th day of November, 2004.


Stacy Forte